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DEPARTMENT FOR NEA/ELA AND AF/SPG

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [UNSC](#) [MASS](#) [EG](#) [SU](#)
SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN FOREIGN, INTELLIGENCE MINISTERS URGE
SUDANESE UNITY

REF: CAIRO 2953

Classified by Minister Counselor for Economic and Political
Affairs William R. Stewart for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) Summary: Egyptian Foreign Minister Aboul Gheit and Intelligence Chief Soliman encouraged Sudanese President Bashir and Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) President Salva Kiir to maintain Sudanese unity during their October 17 Khartoum-Juba visit, according to MFA Cabinet Advisor for African Affairs Ahmed Abu Zeid. Both Sudanese leaders reportedly confirmed to the Egyptians their commitments to peace, even in the wake of SPLM withdrawal from the Government of National Unity (GONU). Abu Zeid criticized recent public statements by U.S. Special Envoy Natsios as, "perhaps inadvertently," encouraging SPLM "hard-liners" who want to escalate the north-south crisis. End summary.

Aboul Gheit and Soliman in Khartoum and Juba

12. (C) On October 21, MFA Cabinet Advisor for African Affairs Ahmed Abu Zeid told poloff that Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs Ahmed Aboul Gheit and Egyptian General Intelligence Service (EGIS) Chief Omar Soliman highlighted the importance of unity to Sudanese President Omar Bashir and Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) President Salva Kiir during their October 17 trip to Khartoum and Juba. In the wake of the SPLM's withdrawal from Sudan's Government of National Unity (GONU), Abu Zeid - who accompanied Aboul Gheit and Soliman on their trip - opined that the "crisis is still there," although replacing former Sudanese Foreign Minister Lam Akol has helped. However, Abu Zeid reported that both Bashir and Kiir assured the Egyptian delegation that they are committed to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), and that they are "not even thinking about war."

13. (C) Bashir described delays in withdrawal of Sudanese Armed Forces, border demarcation, and wealth sharing as "normal" and due to bureaucratic processes, Abu Zeid said. However, he said that Bashir admitted that stalling on the status of Abyei is political, as the ruling National Congress Party (NCP) alleges that the Committee of Experts on Abyei has over-stepped its mandate in demarcating the border there. Abu Zeid said that the Khartoum government was "shocked" by the SPLM withdrawal from the GONU, as the two sides had been "negotiating in good faith" on CPA issues and even on replacing Foreign Minister Akol. Abu Zeid said that Bashir told the Egyptian delegation that he suspected that replacing the foreign minister was the true reason the SPLM withdrew from the GONU.

14. (C) Abu Zeid described Kiir as "very weak" and surrounded by "hard-liners," who want to escalate the situation with the NCP and who pushed Kiir to withdraw from the GONU. Abu Zeid

asserted that there is a division in the SPLM leadership, between those who want to return to the GONU now that Akol has been removed and those who want to push for further concessions on CPA implementation.

Egypt Emphasizes NCP Grievances

¶15. (C) Abu Zeid emphasized that Bashir and the NCP have "done a lot" on CPA implementation, and that the SPLM also bears some responsibility. In particular, Abu Zeid noted that the SPLM does not seem to have used money provided for reconstruction, is refusing to collect taxes for the central government, and is not relinquishing security control in all areas. Abu Zeid noted that the SPLM claims logistical difficulties in withdrawing its forces, and asked rhetorically if the USG could provide logistical support to assist.

Critical of U.S. Public Statements

¶16. (C) Abu Zeid criticized recent USG statements on Sudan as "perhaps inadvertently" bolstering those in the SPLM seeking to escalate the north/south crisis, particularly Special Envoy Natsios' public comments in early October calling the political atmosphere in Sudan "poisonous." The USG should "clarify" its position, he said, to emphasize that the USG is "serious" about the CPA. Poloff confirmed that the USG continues to push for Sudanese unity and that Natsios' comments were in support of CPA implementation.

Darfur Rebels in Egypt, Maybe Again

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¶17. (C) Asked about Egypt's hosting Darfur rebel leaders in Cairo in early October (reftel), Abu Zeid said that Egyptian officials (NFI) met with representatives from Sudan Liberation Movement (SLM)/Unity, SLM/Abu Bakr, and Justice and Equality Movement (JEM)/Khalil Ibrahim. The Egyptians encouraged the rebels to unite behind a single negotiating position before the late October negotiations with the Sudanese government in Libya, he said. Egypt may engage with Darfur rebel leaders again in the coming days to press for the same points.

Update on Egyptian Offer for UNAMID

¶18. (SBU) Abu Zeid confirmed that the UN has accepted one Egyptian infantry battalion of approximately 800 troops for the UN/AU Mission in Darfur (UNAMID). Although Egypt continues to offer a second battalion as well, he said that the first battalion will deploy on UNAMID orders whether or not the second is accepted. Specifically asked about whether Egyptian peacekeepers would deploy even without a Darfur peace deal, Abu Zeid confirmed that even in such a case the Egyptian contingent will be completely under UNAMID control.

Comment

¶19. (C) Egypt's primary interest in its southern neighbor continues to be stability, and Abu Zeid's emphasis on NCP grievances reflects a traditional Egyptian bias towards the ruling NCP. Abu Zeid's defense of NCP actions, criticism of SPLM "hard-liners", and comments on USG official statements all seem designed to move the USG to be more outspoken against the SPLM's "destabilizing" move of withdrawing from the GONU.

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